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Security Council

Sixty-second year

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Wednesday, 31 January 2007, 9.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Miller

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

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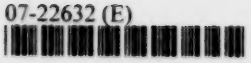

The meeting was called to order at 9.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Jamaica, Japan, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, Senegal and Uruguay, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I am pleased to invite the following participants under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council: His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, President of the Economic and Social Council; His Excellency Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission; Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General in the Peacebuilding Support Office; Mr. Oscar Avalle, Special Representative of the World Bank to the United Nations; and Mr. Reinhard Munzberg, Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations.

Also in accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I am pleased to invite the following participants under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council: the Permanent Representative of Burundi, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Ntakirutimana; the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, His Excellency Mr. Frank Majoor; the Permanent Representative of Norway, His Excellency Mr. Johan Løvald; and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Mr. Sylvester Ekundayo Rowe.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ntakirutimana (Burundi), Mr. Majoor (the Netherlands), Mr. Løvald (Norway) and Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

This morning's meeting of the Security Council deals with one of the most significant challenges on the agenda of the United Nations — that is, how to help countries emerging from crisis to overcome the consequences of conflict, to prevent the renewal of those conflicts and to put those countries on the path to sustainable development.

It was for this very reason that it was decided at the United Nations summit in 2005 to create the Peacebuilding Commission. The beginning of the Commission's work was one of the most important and tangible achievements reached by Member States in the reform of the Organization.

We hope that the discussion in the Security Council and the forthcoming discussion in the General Assembly will give additional impetus to a mutually supportive partnership between these two organs and among all those who are contributing to the peacebuilding process, and that it will facilitate the constructive work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I should like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Speakers with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in the Chamber and to deliver a condensed version when speaking.

I shall now give the floor to the President of the Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis.

Mr. Čekuolis: I wish to thank the Russian presidency of the Council for convening today's

meeting and for inviting me to this debate, which, together with other relevant steps, will help us to improve the contributions of the United Nations bodies to the success of the Peacebuilding Commission, in line with their specific competencies and mandates.

Time and again it has been noted that there is a strong correlation between low levels of development and violent conflict. Nine out of 10 countries with the lowest human development indicators have experienced conflict at some point or another since 1990. According to World Bank estimates, a civil war lasts at least seven years on average, with the growth rate of the local economy reduced by 2.2 per cent each year. This downward spiral of poverty, conflict and added impoverishment is difficult to reverse.

In broader terms, given the linkage between development, peace and security, more focused efforts should be made to advance and oversee the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Economic and Social Council was given the mandate by the 2005 World Summit to focus on this implementation through its annual ministerial reviews. In doing so, the Council intends to continually assess how conflict is affecting the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

International assistance can play a major role in addressing the challenges faced by conflict-prone countries and in filling some of their capacity gaps. The recommendations made by experts on the volume and sustainability of international aid to fragile States and countries emerging from conflicts, therefore, deserve our full consideration. In particular, research suggests that the optimal period for absorbing increased aid is about six years after a peace settlement, by which time donors tend to move on to another country in crisis.

The Economic and Social Council is ready to assist the Peacebuilding Commission in utilizing these insights in its plans and activities. We believe that our respective intergovernmental bodies should exchange views, analyses and policy recommendations on these and other matters.

Another example of the perspectives the Economic and Social Council can share with the Peacebuilding Commission is related, for instance, to policy actions on youth employment, because unemployed young people in countries where this phenomenon is massive are an easy target for recruitment into armed groups. As recently as last year, the Council considered the issue and developed policy recommendations regarding the mainstreaming of youth employment into national development plans and development cooperation programmes. The Council continues to be concerned about the situation in some regions of the world, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, where the two phenomena of youth unemployment and conflict continue to feed on each other.

Through increased interaction and readiness to share relevant experience, we can contribute to strengthening the value added by the Peacebuilding Commission. In this respect, the Economic and Social Council is ready to share its lessons learned, especially given that the pioneering work of the Council's ad hoc advisory groups on countries emerging from conflict was, in a way, a forerunner of this qualitatively new organ — the Peacebuilding Commission, a body meant to ensure an integrated approach to peacebuilding on the basis of the links between security, development, rule of law and human rights.

The Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Haiti, Guinea-Bissau and Burundi have been successful in promoting coordinated support to post-conflict countries through a comprehensive approach to relief, peace and development. In an effort to assess and constantly improve its work, the Council has carried out a lessons-learned exercise through the experience of the ad hoc advisory groups, including the one on Burundi, which is now being considered by the Peacebuilding Commission. I would like to share some of these lessons learned with members of the Security Council.

First of all, the experience of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Burundi and Guinea-Bissau highlighted the need for appropriate mechanisms to mobilize donors and to promote the translation of pledges into disbursements. Secondly, there is a need to go beyond immediate problem-solving in the countries considered to defining, from the very beginning, a vision towards longer-term rehabilitation and support, in order to ensure that assistance is sustainable and is not undermined by organizational and functional problems encountered on the ground. Thirdly, the international community should maintain concrete development support to a country in question, even when factors on the ground — for example, an

electoral process — may incline donors to adopt a "wait and see" approach. Fourthly, it is essential to make good coordinated use of the work of United Nations entities to complement the policy approach of the intergovernmental body through strong support at the technical and operational level. Fifthly and finally, a good articulation must be ensured between United Nations actors and regional partners of the countries concerned, including regional and subregional organizations, regional development banks and the United Nations Regional Commissions.

These and other lessons emerging from the continued work of the Economic and Social Council's ad hoc advisory groups can be further discussed and brought to bear on the future work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We hope that we can further explore practical modalities for interaction between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, in line with General Assembly resolutions. Our common objective should be to mobilize the whole institutional machinery of the United Nations to promote across-the-range policy approaches and best practices to develop answers to the complex and difficult needs of post-conflict countries and prevent their relapse into conflict. The meeting today is a good step in that direction.

For its part, the Economic and Social Council is ready to contribute to the best of its ability, collectively or through its individual members on the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee, to developing the strategic goals and defining a viable peacebuilding strategy of the Commission, thereby ensure its lasting added value.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Čekuolis for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, His Excellency Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins.

Mr. Gaspar Martins: Mr. President, I am pleased and wish to thank you and the Russian presidency for the opportunity to participate in this meeting on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in my capacity as Chairman of that Commission. This is indeed an important occasion to reflect on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission with one of the principal bodies that created it, through its resolution 1645 (2005).

I am equally pleased that the General Assembly has scheduled for 6 February a similar debate, which I hope will provide an opportunity for the wider participation of the membership of our Organization — a fact which we in the Peacebuilding Commission welcome.

Although the Peacebuilding Commission has been in existence for less than a year, questions are already being asked about the results it has achieved during that period. That is a legitimate concern and it speaks to the high expectations that the international community, in particular the Member States, have for that new organ of the United Nations. Yet, we should recognize that peacebuilding is by nature a complex and long-term process which requires persistent and long-term commitment by all. This debate today will, I hope, contribute to mobilizing the commitment needed so that we can move faster, providing more clarity in the discussion of some outstanding procedural issues in the workings of the Commission. Let us all agree that our theoretical differences in New York are meaningless to those who are directly suffering from the consequences of conflict on the ground. What matters for them are concrete actions and not just eloquent statements.

The Peacebuilding Commission will be relevant and succeed only if it paves the way for an engaged partnership and practical actions by its members, as well as by the donor community, regional organizations, multilateral financial institutions and the Governments, civil society and private sectors of countries under consideration by the Peacebuilding Commission. It is that active partnership that will produce the incremental and tangible results we are seeking. Our common efforts are and should be aimed at reinforcing confidence in post-conflict communities, ensuring that countries do not relapse into conflict and that they move swiftly on the path to stability, recovery and development.

The fact that allocations were made from the Peacebuilding Fund for both Burundi and Sierra Leone is an important first step in underlining international commitment and attention. That will certainly have a catalyzing effect, but we do need a long-term commitment from donors to remain engaged with the countries throughout the peacebuilding effort. Equally,

the two countries need to make greater efforts to lay the foundations for sustainable peace.

I am particularly pleased that we are about to decide on country-specific plans of action and a programme of action for the Organizational Committee, which I believe will allow the Commission to review and monitor the implementation of its decisions on a more regular basis. The recent staffing of the Peacebuilding Support Office is also a welcome development. The Office should continue to be given the necessary attention and resources, as it constitutes a vital instrument for the functioning of the Commission.

I am pleased by the contributions recently made to the Peacebuilding Fund. That is an encouraging trend, though the amount available is still insufficient when compared to the needs of the two countries and the urgency of meeting those needs.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a body to which the Council has dedicated much valuable time to establishing. It is the Council's body, and it will perform only in accordance with the means that the Council and the international community put at its disposal in order to meet the high expectations of the populations of countries emerging from conflict. In order to meet the objectives expected from it on the ground, the Commission must be a real bridge for all stakeholders to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, in conformity with the decision made by the heads of State at the September Summit.

I would like to seize this opportunity to commend the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone for providing a legal and political framework by establishing national bodies and a suitable environment to facilitate the work of the Commission on the ground. That is their primary responsibility and the role of national ownership. As stated by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan,

> "[w]here peacebuilding succeeds it is always the leadership of domestic actors that is the essential ingredient of success. No amount of international engagement can substitute for domestic political leaders shouldering their responsibilities and leading their people towards peace and development" (A/61/1, para. 76).

Finally, I want to acknowledge the fact that the new body has a number of issues to address in order to improve its effectiveness and enhance its impact. While we have to acknowledge that the Peacebuilding Commission is still in the early phase of its existence, we also need to be decisive in tackling some of the critical challenges in relation to its working methods and strategic vision. That requires a collective commitment, and I hope that, as we move forward, all members of the Commission and of the United Nations will contribute to that effort.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Gaspar Martins for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the Assistant Secretary-General in the Peacebuilding Support Office, Ms. Carolyn McAskie.

Ms. McAskie: I thank the Security Council for the opportunity to be here today. I am very pleased to provide a short statement in my capacity as head of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

The links between the Commission and the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council are critical, and I know that members of the Commission are exploring how to make the relationships among and between those bodies as effective as possible. How to deal with the critical post-conflict period has escaped our collective best efforts, despite several attempts to address the issue through transitional mechanisms. The creation of those new mechanisms — the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund — offers a new opportunity to address that critical and fragile period in the life of a country ravaged by conflict.

For that to happen, the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role to play in bringing all the actors together. That means that it must and will take on board the work of the Council, as well as that of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, the United Nations agencies and all the partners, be they the financial institutions and other donors, the regional players, internal actors — such as civil society — and any others, as appropriate. That does not mean duplication; that does not mean overlap. Rather, it is the strategic way in which the Commission will work by bringing everyone together.

There is general agreement that, if it is to be most effective, the work must play out at the country level. The test of relevance for all of us will be to apply that approach in a way that will bring results for Burundi and Sierra Leone, in the first instance, and others as time goes on. The Chair and the Vice-Chairs will be working closely over the next several weeks with members of the Commission and with the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone to frame the next stage of the Commission's work, building on the first round of work accomplished so far.

For its part, the Support Office will do everything it can to support the Commission in that important work. The Office must work with the players in the United Nations system, both in the field and at Headquarters, to ensure that the strategies of the Commission are applied to all relevant areas of the United Nations work.

An important part of the Commission's mandate will be to marshal resources. While we all agree that the Peacebuilding Commission is not another donor forum, its work should generate significant additional resources for countries committed to staying on track for peace, to prevent their becoming, once again, the forgotten crises.

The Secretary-General just announced, a few days ago, the first allocation under the Peacebuilding Fund — $35 million for Burundi — and will soon make an announcement regarding Sierra Leone. The Fund, however, can act only as a catalyst. Alone, it cannot address the peacebuilding resource needs of countries emerging from conflict. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission in marshalling resources will be much broader, although the Peacebuilding Fund — which has been set up rapidly and which has attracted very significant contributions from donors — is an extremely useful start.

It is only by bringing all the actors together that the Peacebuilding Commission can fulfil its mandate to advise on and propose integrated strategies for peacebuilding and to identify critical elements of peacebuilding in the countries under its consideration, bringing them together under an integrated strategic approach. It is in that way that the Commission can work inclusively to define its own objectives, enter into agreements with the countries under its consideration and provide guidance to the various actors as to how they can meet the broad goals of peacebuilding across the range of political, security, human rights and economic and social interventions — always under the lead of the country concerned itself.

As I said, my Office is committed to supporting the Commission and the overall efforts of the international community in that important endeavour, including through extracting lessons learned and becoming the repository for peacebuilding advice within the United Nations Secretariat. We are now closer to completing the staffing requirements for that stage of the Office's work, and will continue to discuss with members of the Commission their vision for the work of the Support Office, in particular in the context of this year's budget discussions.

Under the leadership of El Salvador, in its capacity as Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, work on lessons learned will begin soon, with the establishment of a working group that will include broad participation by all Commission members.

In the long run, peacebuilding must not be another layer of work for Governments or the United Nations or donors on the ground. Instead, it should define the way in which we frame our interventions to ensure that we can most effectively respond to the immediate needs of a post-conflict society and keep hard-won peace processes on a sustainable track.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. McAskie for her statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Johan Løvald, Permanent Representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Today's discussion — like the subsequent discussion in the General Assembly on 6 February — is an important occasion to highlight the importance of peacebuilding. We must maintain and, if possible, further increase the momentum behind our peacebuilding efforts. While our focus at all times must be on concrete results at the country level, we are all also conscious of the importance of this endeavour for the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

Since entering office, the Government of Burundi has embarked on a series of planning and consultation processes in order to prepare development strategies to move Burundi from an emergency situation to a more normal pattern of development. Those strategies include the Government's emergency programme, the

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the United Nations Common Humanitarian Action Plan and Joint Road Map and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Finally, I should also mention the establishment by the Government of Burundi of a joint Government-United Nations peacebuilding committee. Thus, much is already being done at the country level. Burundi has made progress in consolidating peace. However, the situation is still fragile, and continued international support is needed.

The Peacebuilding Commission held two meetings on the situation in Burundi last fall. The Government of Burundi participated actively at the ministerial level on both occasions. I should like to thank the Government of Burundi for the very close cooperation extended to the Peacebuilding Commission, including myself, during my visit to Bujumbura last fall.

The identification of priorities for peacebuilding and how to address them was the focus of those two country-specific meetings. At the first country-specific meeting three main critical peacebuilding challenges were identified in Burundi, namely: promoting good governance, strengthening the rule of law and the security sector and ensuring community recovery. Based on those critical challenges, a number of important peacebuilding priorities were identified. Among other things, those included strengthening national dialogue, continued efforts to include women in the consolidation of peace, sustained political support from countries in the region and strengthening of the Government's ability to deliver on basic services, inter alia through budgetary support.

The Peacebuilding Commission's engagement with Burundi is now entering a new phase. The Commission will, in the near future, finalize its work plan and commence work on an integrated approach to peacebuilding, clearly outlining Burundi's commitments and the response to be provided by the international community in critical areas. At the same time, we should continue to work with the Government to monitor progress in the critical areas already identified. In that regard, I would like to welcome the decision by the second Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to establish a regional follow-up mechanism — to include a Conference secretariat — and to establish its offices in Bujumbura. I am sure that the Peacebuilding Commission would like to discuss how we can also support peacebuilding in that regional perspective.

On 29 January, at the African Union Summit held in Addis Ababa, the Secretary-General formally announced a Peacebuilding Fund country envelope of $35 million for Burundi. I welcome that development. In the Peacebuilding Commission, we must now decide how we can build on that and achieve a catalytic effect. We recognize, of course, that funding through the Peacebuilding Fund can only provide initial support. Much more will be needed from other sources.

Donor per capita assistance to Burundi remains low. The international community must support national efforts to address the priorities and gaps identified by the Government. The upcoming donors' round table to be held at Bujumbura from 15 to 16 March will provide an opportunity to respond to those challenges. The Peacebuilding Commission would obviously like to consider that event and discuss how integrated peacebuilding efforts can complement the results of the round table.

Let me also offer a very brief national point of view. We are humbled by the enormous challenges facing Burundi. The Norwegian Government is committed to doing what it can in order to achieve durable peace and economic development. The visit to Burundi by Norway's Minister for Development Cooperation last month laid the groundwork for a bilateral programme in support of development and peacebuilding. In consequence, Norway will in the near future establish an embassy in Bujumbura.

To sum up, successful peacebuilding will necessitate sustained political and material support in the years to come, from all stakeholders: the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, donors, civil society and regional actors. Similarly, continued national ownership will be key, based on an inclusive approach within which all relevant segments of society can contribute.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Løvald for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Frank Majoor, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): I very much welcome this opportunity, early in the new year, to participate in the Security Council's discussion on the Peacebuilding Commission, and to do so in my capacity as

Chairperson of the Commission's country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone.

Allow me to refer to my statement before the Security Council made on 22 December 2006 (see S/PV.5608), when I was invited to brief Council members on the outcome of the country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone that had taken place in October and December 2006. While various activities have been ongoing in Sierra Leone itself, as well as at an informal level within the Peacebuilding Commission, I believe that my 22 December statement still very much reflects the state of play as concerns the Commission's involvement with Sierra Leone. Allow me, therefore, to refrain from repeating the overview that I presented at that time and instead make a number of additional remarks that may feed into today's discussions.

First, I very much welcome the interest shown by the Security Council in the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, as demonstrated by today's debate. The same is true for the interest shown by other bodies within the United Nations, such as the General Assembly — which intends to discuss the Commission's work next week — and the Economic and Social Council, and by those outside the United Nations. Today represents a good opportunity to strengthen our common focus on our shared interests, that is, to assist Sierra Leone and Burundi — as the first countries under consideration — in building peace and in preventing any possible relapse into conflict.

Secondly, I wish to stress that good progress has been made in Sierra Leone in addressing the identified gaps in critical areas. Allow me to highlight just a few recent developments.

A national steering committee on peacebuilding has been established by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to relate to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund. It will bring together Government, the United Nations, donors and civil society representatives to jointly address peacebuilding priorities.

Also in Sierra Leone, consultations are ongoing to finalize the priority plan for funding from the Peacebuilding Fund. Once the review process stipulated in the terms of reference for the Fund is completed, it is expected that a country envelope in excess of the initially indicated $25 million will be made available.

At the Peacebuilding Commission's most recent country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone, members of the Commission urged the international community to lend support to the Government of Sierra Leone in order to broaden its donor base and secure assistance, including further debt relief. I am pleased to note that the World Bank's International Development Association and the International Monetary Fund have agreed that Sierra Leone has made sufficient progress to reach the completion point under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

The Commission also called on the international community to provide, in a timely manner, adequate resources and support for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections, including capacity-building to ensure women's equal participation in the political process. In this area a great deal of progress has been observed. The initial resource gap of $7 million for the election has been reduced to less than $3 million, with further pledges expected. Progress has been made in establishing an independent National Electoral Commission to prepare credible elections.

The signing of an electoral code of conduct by eight political parties, the strengthening of the Sierra Leone police and the countrywide discussions on a media code of conduct for electoral reporting are other examples of progress.

Finally, allow me to revert to the process of the Peacebuilding Commission's discussions in New York. Next week, members of the country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone will discuss a work plan for the work of the Commission on Sierra Leone. This work plan is to guide our activities in the coming months leading up to the next country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone, due to take place in March or April. It sets a timeline and defines the actions to be undertaken by the Sierra Leone Government, the United Nations system and other stakeholders. Ownership, especially at the national level, and close coordination between New York and national actors are crucial. A key focus of the work of the Commission on Sierra Leone in these coming months will be the development of an integrated approach to outline clearly the commitments made by the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community.

I am confident that in the spirit that has guided the Commission's discussions thus far, we will be able to continue to engage in meaningful discussions in the

country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone and, in the process, contribute to the building of peace in Sierra Leone. It will require the involvement of all the stakeholders: the Government of Sierra Leone, the full membership of the Peacebuilding Commission, potential other donors, the United Nations country team and the individual United Nations bodies on the ground, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector.

It will also require continued support by the Security Council, and I therefore very much welcome the Council's continued engagement regarding the Peacebuilding Commission and Sierra Leone in particular.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now give the floor to Mr. Oscar Avalle, Special Representative of the World Bank to the United Nations.

Mr. Avalle (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a privilege to address the Security Council on behalf of the World Bank during this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. I wish to reaffirm the full support and commitment of the World Bank to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, in all its aspects and at all levels.

As members of the international community, we cannot afford to ignore the urgent problems currently faced by countries in crisis. It is our obligation to speedily provide the urgent assistance necessary to respond to the needs of those countries. In this context, we believe that the United Nations system plays a critical role in conflict prevention and resolution, but we cannot forget that after the conflict is over the work must continue, with support for reconstruction and the economic and social recovery and development of the countries affected. Like Ms. McAskie, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission is a useful and effective instrument which makes it possible to deepen our engagement with the United Nations system and to continue to work together in a coordinated manner, responding to the needs of affected countries.

It should be recalled that more than 16 per cent of the population of the world, a billion people, live — or rather, exist — in extreme poverty and are directly affected by civil war or are at high risk of being so affected in the very near future. The legacy of conflict is well known; it is a terrible legacy, and that is why over the last decade the World Bank has significantly expanded its conceptual work in the area of the reconstruction of countries affected by conflict.

Our research has confirmed that security and development are inherently connected. But we must also work together with all stakeholders, offering the necessary holistic support for peacemaking processes and drawing up genuine long-term development plans that turn into concrete action on the ground. This is why we believe that the work of the Peacebuilding Commission is critical and should yield concrete results in the real world and in the field. The work of the Commission and all of our work will thus be judged not only by our work here in New York, but primarily by the concrete results achieved in the countries concerned. The World Bank has actively supported the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, with the main objective of improving coordination and cooperation of all of the actors involved. The World Bank is committed to cooperating even more closely with the Commission both in New York and in the field, with all of the resources that we can provide, and that have been requested, insofar as possible.

We welcome all of the efforts being made by the Commission in order to create a more focused agenda that would lead to specific results for the benefit of the affected countries. Unfortunately, thus far, we have still have not been able to take part directly in all of the Commission's meetings, as originally stipulated in resolution 1645 (2005).

I would conclude by saying that we are ready to work jointly with all of our partners to ensure that there is international support and the necessary strategic cooperation among all of the parties that are committed to promoting the peacebuilding processes and to achieve sustainable development.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Avalle for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Reinhard Munzberg, Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations.

Mr. Munzberg: Mr. President, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to intervene at this meeting of the Security Council on the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a very useful forum where all relevant aspects of a country in a post-conflict situation can be addressed in a comprehensive

fashion. We are prepared to cooperate actively with that forum. As members know, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is already involved in a number of post-conflict cases, including in the two countries that are on the agenda of the country-specific meetings of the Commission. We share the Commission's emphasis on work on concrete country cases and on country ownership of strategies. Our activities and those of the Commission need to be well integrated in those country-owned strategies.

The Commission has made good progress, together with the countries concerned, in identifying priority areas that need to be addressed. We have interacted with the Commission in the country meetings and also in the field. Interactive discussions are of particular value.

We appreciate the fact that the IMF will be invited to meetings of the Commission, as stated in the resolution establishing the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, it would be useful if the issue of attendance at meetings of the Organizational Committee could be clarified.

We are satisfied that the Commission will be an advisory body, and, accordingly, we will inform our governing organs of the progress of the Commission's work in order to ensure that their decisions are informed by the Commission's deliberations on the whole spectrum of aspects relevant to a specific case.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Munzberg for his statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Joseph Ntakirutimana, Permanent Representative of Burundi.

Mr. Ntakirutimana (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to be able to speak before the members of the Security Council on an important topic, peacebuilding in post-conflict countries. This subject is today of concern to the various stakeholders determined to offer space for stability, development and hope to countries shattered by conflicts.

On behalf of my delegation and on my own account, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having invited Burundi to this debate. I would also like to express my gratitude, and that of the people of Burundi, to all the members of the Peacebuilding Commission for the extensive support and encouragement they provided during the country-specific meetings where Burundi was on the Commission's agenda. Similarly, I would also like to express appreciation for the efforts of the Peacebuilding Support Office, which, in a new and difficult context, is trying to make the Commission a success.

In July 2006, the delegation of Burundi was able to offer to the members of the Peacebuilding Commission a comprehensive view of the situation in Burundi. Commission members were able to become familiar with the desolation and poverty through which my country is struggling after more than 10 years of civil war.

During the country-specific meeting on Burundi last October, the delegation of Burundi offered a detailed picture of the effects of war in several areas of national life. The members of the Commission were able to see for themselves the immense needs facing the Government of Burundi. Our delegation was also able to stress the many efforts being made by the Government in order to help Burundi emerge from an economic, political and social situation that is significantly impacted by the adverse consequences of conflict.

Those efforts were also noted and welcomed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which have been tracking the evolution of the Burundian economy and which were also invited to the same meeting.

Following the October meeting, the delegation of Burundi returned home with the task of preparing a presentation for the country-specific meeting on Burundi that was planned for December 2006. The Government of Burundi had to establish a list of urgent priorities, formulate the technical specifications of those priorities, and so on. My Government immediately set up a national peacebuilding commission, which has worked day and night, untiringly, in synergy with the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), the diplomats on the ground and civil society.

Following that country-specific meeting on Burundi on 12 December 2006, the Peacebuilding Support Office pledged to the Burundian delegation a package designed to finance the projects presented at that meeting. We are extremely grateful for that.

Once again, I would like to thank all of the countries that have already contributed to the

Peacebuilding Fund. By doing so, they have made it possible for the new Commission to be operational and to get down to brass tacks.

While welcoming the work that has already been done by the Commission, my delegation would like to make the following observations. First of all, seven months after its creation, the Commission should finally become operational and deal with the implementation of projects that were selected in December 2006. Secondly, my delegation would like to understand the mechanism or mechanisms for disbursing the allocated funds and would especially hope that these mechanisms might be made more flexible.

Thirdly, my country is organizing a donor round table in March 2007, for which I would like to request the support of the Commission at three levels. First, we would like to see members of the Commission attend the donor round table, which we plan to hold on 14 March 2007. Secondly, we would like the Peacebuilding Commission to provide ongoing support to the Burundian Government so as to galvanize donors, ensuring the success of the round table. Thirdly, given the fact that most of the donors are members of the Peacebuilding Commission, we urge each member to be present at the March meeting and possibly to announce a contribution.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Ntakirutimana for his statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Sylvester Ekundayo Rowe, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): It is an honour for Sierra Leone to have been selected as one of the first two countries to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. It is also an honour for my delegation to speak as a country-specific participant at this meeting of the Security Council.

We are grateful to the United Nations and the international community for their continued engagement with the situation in Sierra Leone following the devastating rebel war. That engagement has been demonstrated in many practical ways. For instance, following the successful peacekeeping operation — the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone — the Organization established its first Integrated Office in Sierra Leone. The Office — now in its second year — is, indeed, an experiment, and hopefully it will become a model of United Nations post-peacekeeping. It has set the pace for a similar mechanism in Burundi.

It will also be recalled that a few years ago Sierra Leone became the subject of another experiment: an experiment in transitional justice, in the form of a hybrid Special Court, based on national and international criminal law, to try individuals accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Incidentally, as we all know, that experiment has been working well but is facing funding problems. The Special Court cannot become a model without the financial resources necessary to conclude its work within the established time frame.

Now Sierra Leone finds itself the subject of yet another experiment in post-conflict cooperation, namely, as a specific country under consideration by the new Peacebuilding Commission. We are occupying an enviable position. My delegation would like to assure the Security Council that Sierra Leone will make good use of its position in this worthy experiment. We are committed to the integrated approach to peacebuilding that the United Nations has adopted in post-conflict peacebuilding leading to sustainable development.

Sierra Leone had great expectations regarding the Commission. We saw it — and still see it — as a supplementary but effective instrument for facilitating the process of early post-conflict recovery. We have faith in its commitment to help us to address some of the problems and challenges that require urgent attention, and our expectations remain high.

As others have pointed out, the Peacebuilding Commission is new. It is still going through the proverbial teething stage. Perhaps one could say that it is even too early to make a definitive and objective evaluation of its substantive work. However, in the view of my delegation, the results of the recent country-specific meetings augur well for the future success of the Commission. For Sierra Leone, a highlight of those meetings was the conclusion that an envelope of approximately $25 million was expected to be made available as an initial — I stress: initial — contribution towards the implementation of our priority programmes.

It is in this regard that my delegation would like to emphasize that any assessment of the work of the

Peacebuilding Commission must be based on its objectives and mandate as outlined in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

First of all, we should always bear in mind that the Commission is a special mechanism created to address the special needs of a special group or category of countries. Accordingly, the process of meeting those special needs may require some elements of creativity, flexibility and adaptability.

Secondly, the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission reflects a sense of urgency — we are in a hurry. If, indeed, the Commission is to help ensure that countries emerging from conflict do not relapse into conflict, and if provision has been made for the Commission to deal with any situation where a country is at risk of or already relapsing into armed conflict, it follows that the Commission and the international community must act speedily to avert imminent crisis.

As far as achieving the objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission is concerned, the bottom line is "resources, resources, resources". Indeed, throughout the mandate of the Commission, the key words are "assistance" and "resources" — and we can look at the mandate and objectives again. Of course, the Commission was created to provide advice and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict recovery. Of course, its job — or part of its job — is to mobilize sustained international attention on the needs of our countries, even beyond the period of post-conflict recovery. However, we should bear in mind — and I would like to emphasize this — that the Commission is expected to assist our countries in laying the foundation for sustainable development, to mobilize assistance and, I stress, to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and help ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities.

This brings me to the issue of delivery, which is very close to our heart. My delegation believes that the most effective way that the international community can continue to demonstrate its continued engagement with Sierra Leone and other least developed countries emerging from conflict is through the timely delivery of the necessary assistance to meet the special needs of the countries concerned. My delegation notes with satisfaction that the most recent country-specific meeting of the Commission stressed that every effort should be made to deliver the Peacebuilding Fund country assistance envelope for Sierra Leone in January 2007 so that implementation of the agreed short-term priorities can commence immediately.

The Sierra Leone delegation is aware that the processes of mobilizing and marshalling resources are complex. They obviously require extensive coordination and consultations at various levels — at the national level and at the international level. However, timely delivery of assistance is crucial to the success of the whole recovery process. We are encouraged by the commitment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the international community, especially those countries that have made generous contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund. We applaud them. We want just to take this opportunity today to make an appeal, in the form of a reminder that before the ruthless rebel war, Sierra Leone was one of the least developed countries of the world. The conflict made an already precarious situation even worse. While we share many or most of the problems that other post-conflict countries face, we should realize that Sierra Leone is, in a sense, unique. It should be treated according to its own particular circumstances.

My delegation is confident that within the next few days the Secretary-General will announce the allocation of an appreciable amount from the Peacebuilding Fund that is commensurate with the special needs and critical priorities that we outlined in the Peacebuilding Commission last year.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Rowe for his statement.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Panama believes that this is an opportune moment to recall that heads of State or Government, meeting during the 2005 World Summit, acknowledged the need for the Organization to carry out a coordinated, consistent and integrated peacebuilding and reconciliation effort in countries that have emerged from conflict. To meet that need, they established the Peacebuilding Commission with the participation of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

That is why Panama believes it is appropriate that both the General Assembly and the Security Council have decided to conduct an initial review of how, in terms of form and substance, the Commission is carrying out the task entrusted to it. After all, the maintenance of international peace and security is a

task entrusted to both the Assembly and the Council by the Charter itself. The mission of Panama believes that that task must be carried out in a coherent, coordinated and comprehensive manner.

The objective of this consultation process should be an initial assessment of the Commission's working mechanisms and decision-making processes so that all of these organs, each within its own perspective, can have the information and knowledge they need in order to provide the Commission, if necessary, with timely assistance or advice so that it can carry out the task entrusted to it by the heads of State and Government.

We acknowledge that the Peacebuilding Commission is still in the process of finding its own identity. However, we applaud the efforts of the Organizational Committee and the Peacebuilding Support Office in preparing for meetings on specific cases, assessing the progress on those cases and drawing up a plan based on the requests of the Governments of Sierra Leone and Burundi.

We expect and are resolved that the Peacebuilding Commission will distinguish itself through effective and efficient performance. To that end, each and every one of us who are involved must maintain a firm commitment to act with the promptness and transparency that this responsibility requires. The Commission's function must be to coordinate the available resources in a comprehensive, rigorous and coherent manner in order to make it easier for the countries under its auspices to have the programmes, institutions and capacities that will enable them to take the necessary measures to achieve economically sustainable and socially responsible development.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the fact that the Security Council is today considering the role of the Peacebuilding Commission. We highlight the participation in this debate by the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and the delegations in charge of following up on the cases of Sierra Leone and Burundi, as well as representatives of the major international financial institutions, whose statements will enrich this debate.

The Peacebuilding Commission is one of the outcomes of the 25 Summit, which reaffirmed our confidence in multilateralism as a way to face the new challenges arising in the transition from the maintenance of international peace and security to stability and development. If it is to carry out that mandate, this new organ must be as useful and effective as possible. That is undoubtedly the spirit that, we are sure, we all share as we take part in this debate.

Peru supports the efforts to sustain the peacemaking and reconstruction processes in countries emerging from violent armed conflict, and it participates in peacekeeping operations dealing with such cases. We are aware that recent history has demonstrated that the premature withdrawal of peace operations puts countries back into a situation of crisis and violence, which no one wants; that conflicts seemingly overcome have re-emerged; and that the populations involved lose faith in the effectiveness of these peacemaking processes.

Prolonged conflicts create a perverse dynamic of force and destruction as permanent instruments of power and even of survival. To counteract that, we must reconstruct the social fabric, establish a culture of peace and convey the notion that the best security and the most benefits are to be found in peace, thus enhancing its social value.

That requires a comprehensive approach that includes the military and police component that restores the security environment; the rebuilding of public institutions, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights; and attention to the structural economic and social elements, the poverty, marginalization and exclusion that are at the root of many of these conflicts.

A fundamental component of peacebuilding is development. There will always be a greater risk of relapse into conflict to the extent that people feel vulnerable and see no improvement in their situation. We must lay the foundations for development in the form of institution-building, justice and respect for human rights, but also in the provision of services such as health, education, security and opportunities for economic inclusion.

In order to build a viable and sustainable peace process, it is essential that the local actors in these conflicts be committed to that process and carry it out responsibly. That element must underlie peacebuilding initiatives and is ultimately the only guarantee that armed violence will not destroy the progress that has been made. In that connection, inclusive processes are

necessary to create links of interdependence and mutual commitments and obligations among the parties involved. Thus, through the path of participation, we create common spaces for aspirations and objectives, and national identity and a feeling of belonging are affirmed.

That is why reconstruction programmes must not repeat the events that made the States fail in the first place. We must build democratic societies with viable economies — that is, States that emerge from disorder and backwardness and take charge of their own destiny. These processes must be adapted to each specific situation, in which the Peacebuilding Commission must promote the development of national capacities and institutions capable of developing organic plans and projects that provide continuity and consistency to the national effort and attract international cooperation.

It is important to appropriately define areas of work and, when possible, to establish suitable indicators that let us know about progress in the management capacity of a country emerging from conflict. Likewise, such indicators will make it possible to assess progress and the relevance of the recommendations and assistance of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We also believe that the Commission must help to improve the coordination between the United Nations and the system's agencies so that there will be appropriate leadership on the ground and a clear mandate for the tasks of peacebuilding. Moreover, reconstruction is a process that must arouse the interest of national and international private enterprise. That is why we need to formulate programmes capable of attracting such business participation. It also means that we must redouble our efforts to strengthen State institutions so as to ensure that special interests coincide with the general interest, that reconstruction programmes are transparent and that the resources generated — including those derived from the exploitation of natural resources — have increased benefits among the population. This should also be a requirement in programmes of the international financial institutions.

Let me conclude by noting that we are closely following the way in which the cases of Sierra Leone and Burundi are currently being addressed by the Peacebuilding Commission. Without doubt, it is a challenge to all of us to enable those countries are able to make a successful transition to stability and development.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes at the outset to thank the Russian Federation for its initiative to organize today's debate during its presidency of the Security Council. I wish also to welcome the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and Ms. Carolyn McAskie, and to thank them, and the other previous speakers, for their statements. Those statements clearly indicated everything that is at stake in ensuring that the Peacebuilding Commission is successful in its mission and outlined the all challenges that it must meet to achieve that success.

In our view, it is vital that flexible and effective interaction between the Commission and the Security Council be developed in practice; we hope that the Council will regularly consider the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We hope too that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council will devote particular attention to the new body's work, as provided for in the resolutions that established the Commission.

While we fully endorse the statement that will be made by the presidency of the European Union, I wish to speak of some particular aspects of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission's added value derives from its capacity to deal in a concentrated manner with problems that are specific to peacebuilding processes, by tackling the most urgent challenges. The participation in the Commission's work of all relevant actors on the ground, in particular States of the region and institutional and bilateral donors, is fundamental in that regard. Here, my delegation fully supports participation in the meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as their representatives have proposed today.

Most often, issues of institution-building — related to such areas as the rule of law, good governance and security-sector reform — are key post-conflict priorities. In many cases, those areas fall outside the realm of intervention and the capacity of development actors. By their very nature, they require close coordination of activities undertaken on the ground. I am thinking in particular of disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration processes, which lie at the intersection of peacekeeping and development concerns.

By making it possible to identify goals and priorities shared by all actors and to coordinate their activities in accordance with a timetable for intervention that is robust but adapted to immediate priorities, the Peacebuilding Commission can become an essential instrument for setting countries emerging from crisis firmly on the path to peace and sustainable development.

The first country-specific meetings, on Burundi and Sierra Leone, have made it possible to start identifying areas that are critical for the peacebuilding processes in those countries on the basis of analyses carried out by their national authorities. That is at the core of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, and it must continue with a view to precisely identifying priority actions and measures to be undertaken in areas seen as crucial to the peacebuilding process. At the end of the process, all actors in the field, first and foremost the authorities of the countries concerned, should have a road map that can form the basis for an appropriate and lasting commitment by the international community.

In that spirit, we consider that the Commission should focus its efforts at this stage on preparations for country-specific meetings concerning the countries on its agenda. The Peacebuilding Support Office, which is now operational, has a critical role to play here. We consider that speedy and appropriate distribution to Commission members of information relating to the countries concerned is essential. An inventory of actions undertaken in each of the areas critical for the peacebuilding process has already been carried out. It should now be the basis for identifying gaps and improving coordination among all peacebuilding actors in the two countries.

In addition to projects financed by the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission's work should lead to better allocation of resources and enhanced involvement by all actors, starting with the authorities of the countries concerned. Those authorities should, of course, be closely involved in the preparation and implementation of the work of the Commission. Here, I want to pay tribute to the endeavours carried out by the authorities of Burundi and of Sierra Leone in liaison with the United Nations and other actors.

My delegation wishes in conclusion to reaffirm the importance it attaches to the goal of being able collectively and in the very near future to achieve tangible results for the countries being considered by the Commission. I wish also to stress that at the appropriate time the Security Council should fully integrate those results into its work. The Council ought to be able to share in the added value that the Peacebuilding Commission should bring to our collective effort to promote peace and security.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative in organizing a debate on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. My comments supplement those that our colleague, the representative of Germany, will make on behalf of the presidency of the European Union, with which my delegation aligns itself.

Belgium has been closely involved in the initial work of the Peacebuilding Commission because we believe in the Commission and will continue to do so. I shall limit my statement to a few brief comments.

It should be recalled that the Peacebuilding Commission is multidimensional in nature. It stands at the intersection of questions relating to such concepts as security, good governance, justice, the rule of law, reconstruction and development. That is because it has two parents: the Security Council and the General Assembly. Its multidimensional nature is reflected in the Commission's primary task: to make use of the various existing reconstruction and development plans and strategies to promote the use of an integrated approach taking account of the specific needs of fragile States and the potential threats to peace and stability. The goal is not a package of limited, short-term measures, but comprehensive medium-term and long-term support enabling us to provide guidance to all bilateral and multilateral actors both within the United Nations system and outside it — as well, of course, as in the country itself.

But such an integrated approach must not exist only in the abstract: it must specifically and concretely identify the risks, priorities, shortcomings and weaknesses that require specific attention.

It is essentially the quality and credibility of this approach that will convince donors to support it by working together and by being actively involved, including in financial terms. The Commission, the

Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund should not be substitutes for current donors but should inform them and guide them, as appropriate, in order to supplement their action. Here, of course, it is vital that all players, beginning with the country concerned, and including civil society and the private sector, be fully involved in the design of these strategies.

I would like to conclude with some more practical considerations. The work of the Peacebuilding Commission takes place, first and foremost, in the country-specific meetings, which could benefit from informal discussions on specific aspects of the action to be taken in a given country with regard to peacebuilding. More sustained work could also be enhanced by relevant documents produced by various players, but above all by the Peacebuilding Support Office. We too, as the Security Council, can support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission by creating more regular and more systematic interaction with the Commission — for example, through briefings to the Council by the Chairs of the country-specific meetings. Beyond the request for general comments, we could ask the Peacebuilding Commission for guidelines on specific peacebuilding issues, and we could do so in a timely way, so that the Commission's views could be usefully integrated into our own work.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): I think the timeliness of this debate is reflected in the food for thought it is generating. At the outset, I would like to express deep appreciation and support for what Ambassador Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, said earlier in this meeting, and to draw the attention of Council members to it. Let me quote him briefly. He said, "Let us all agree that our theoretical differences in New York are meaningless to those who are directly suffering from the consequences of conflict on the ground. What matters for them are concrete actions ..." (*Supra*). I think that this is a benchmark that must remain clear in our minds. What we do has an effect on the ground.

In general terms, I think we have to express the strongest support for the Chairman of the Organizational Committee. If he does not feel that he has the House behind him, he will not be able to be effective. As our colleague the representative of Sierra Leone has said, we will need creativity, flexibility and adaptability. When it comes to the Commission, it will be mainly the responsibility of the Chair to inspire flexibility and creativity. But he will not be able to be creative if he does not feel that the House is behind him. That was the first point I wanted to make.

Secondly, I fully endorse the statement that my colleague, the representative of Germany, will deliver later on behalf of the European Union. I want to stress the importance of the points that he will make. Because of time constraints I will not repeat his words, except to quote briefly from what he will say, according to his advance text:

> "If the Commission is to add value to peacebuilding efforts worldwide...it will have to be ambitious. It will have to be more than the tools we already have: more than a mere coordination mechanism and more than a donors conference. Promoting the development of a viable peacebuilding strategy is where the Peacebuilding Commission can really create added value."

Here, we should bear in mind what Assistant Secretary-General McAskie said on this matter.

I will now limit myself to a few additional remarks. I think that, in shaping and implementing our strategies, we will need, first, to focus strongly on institution-building, as mentioned in operative paragraph 2 (b) of Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180, in line with the inspiration of the Peacebuilding Commission: to strengthen the sovereignty of post-conflict States by increasing the effectiveness and credibility of national policies and institutions, with particular reference to the rule of law. As my Belgian colleague said, this will increase the attractiveness of such States to private foreign investors.

Secondly, we will need to include a clear sequencing of actions and clear indications to all stakeholders, including donors, of what needs to be done.

Thirdly, the strategy should be based on a broad sense of ownership. National responsibility should be at the centre of the peacebuilding process. Institutional donors and relevant regional organizations should be fully on board, through regular consultations both in New York and at the country level. I hope involvement, like that we have seen today, by the World Bank and

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will be structured and will continue in the future.

Fourthly, the involvement of civil society, including the national and international private sectors, should be deepened and widened. I will not elaborate further here.

Finally, the Peacebuilding Commission should also elaborate a system of benchmarks to monitor progress in implementation. We need monitoring, but monitoring is not just making reports after a certain number of months on what has been done. We are submerged in reports. What is needed is proactive monitoring along the way. It should not point out who is doing well or who is doing badly, but it should just point out where we stand week after week and what has to be done. We know what proactive monitoring is. This is an aspect that has to be injected into the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and into that of the parent bodies of the Commission: the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Of course, we should start developing objective criteria for phasing out the involvement of the Peacebuilding Commission in countries that are under consideration and that are successful. We should also start thinking — as we are, in fact, doing — about possible new entries on the Commission's agenda.

On a final note, we believe that the Security Council should work together with the Peacebuilding Commission with a view to designing conflict-sensitive peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies. When I say "work together", I mean not only having a meeting like today's from time to time, but rather having more interactive meetings where we can see a ways and means process, together with the General Assembly. As we are all aware, and as has to be clear in our minds, the issue is not only how the Commission can assist or advise the Council; it is also how the Council can provide the Peacebuilding Commission with operational input.

We, therefore, believe that the Security Council should, for example, request the advice of the Commission when renewing the mandates of existing peacekeeping missions or when establishing new ones, with a view to developing integrated mission planning processes. The renewal of the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, could present the first opportunity for an early peacebuilding planning process. Then, it would act on the advice of the Commission by supporting the crucial functions of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and the United Nations Operation in Burundi on the ground, with a clear mandate and ad hoc expertise. In particular, the role of the United Nations Integrated Offices in facilitating coordination and consultation among all stakeholders, including donors, should be strengthened, as has been mentioned by some of my colleagues.

Finally, the promptness of the Commission's responses to Security Council requests for advice should be promoted. We need timely advice. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office should pool their resources and coordinate their efforts in support of the Commission — and I am very grateful to Assistant Secretary-General McAskie for her earlier statement in that regard — in order to ensure smooth and efficient interaction between the two bodies and, of course, between the Peacebuilding Commission and the General Assembly.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate, the first of its kind in the Council since the Peacebuilding Commission started its work. It gives us a timely opportunity to review the Commission's activities and the best ways to support it.

I also wish to commend and thank Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, and Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie of the Peacebuilding Support Office for their efforts in a new field. We wish them every success in their work.

The establishment of the peacebuilding mechanism composed of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund is among the most practical and tangible steps taken by the international community to date in the context of operationalizing the indisputable concept that the dedication of resources necessary to peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflict is critical to the consolidation of stability, peace and development. Similarly, the assistance received by those countries from the international community plays a pivotal role in safeguarding against their relapse into conflict.

The Commission is still an infant entity and struggling to identify the best ways and means to achieve the objectives for which it was established. Since its inception, it has received encouraging and positive responses from the two countries on its agenda, Burundi and Sierra Leone, where national and international efforts have succeeded in ending their respective conflicts. The success of the peacebuilding phase there will no doubt consolidate those positive results. Given that the Security Council is the primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the success of the peacebuilding process in Burundi and Sierra Leone will be a valuable complement to the efforts of the Council, which is engaged in ongoing follow-up on the situations there.

Peacebuilding is an integrated process and a multidimensional endeavour undertaken by various United Nations entities, and cannot be broken down into its component tasks. In recognition of that vision, it was decided at the 2005 Summit to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as a consultative organ, under two resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, respectively. Thus, the Commission must work within the mandate given to it by the General Assembly and the Security Council.

If the Commission is to meet its objectives, there must be close coordination between it and the Peacebuilding Support Office and the other principal bodies of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Peacebuilding activities embody one aspect of such coordination aimed at fulfilling the vision set out in the Organization's Charter. Moreover, the Commission's mandate encourages consultation with civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in order to ensure that it receive the input of international organizations in its peacebuilding activities.

There is no doubt that several other countries are appropriate candidates for inclusion on the Commission's agenda. In every case, we must take the fundamental principles of peacebuilding into consideration by acknowledging the unique specificity of each country and hence the different methods by which peacebuilding operations should be conducted. It is important that the Commission and countries emerging from conflict agree on the methodology for undertaking peacebuilding activities if the desired objectives are to be reached.

As we have noted, the Peacebuilding Commission is an advisory body seeking to assist countries emerging from conflict in identifying the optimal approach to conducting the peacebuilding process. Its mandate also includes the mobilization of necessary international resources to attain its goals. Consequently, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Commission together constitute an integrated mechanism. We therefore appeal to the international community to donate generously and to mobilize the resources necessary to maintaining the process of peacebuilding and reconstruction.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of the Congo thanks you, Sir, for allowing the Council today to make an initial assessment of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, which held its first meeting on 23 June 2006. We welcome the participation in this important debate of the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, and representatives of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, bilateral partners of the Commission and, of course, the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by Ms. Carolyn McAskie.

The creation of the Peacebuilding Commission was a major step taken as a result of a joint effort and as the expression of a desire clearly identified by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit, in accordance with the purposes and principles of our Organization. When we recall that the official launch of the Peacebuilding Fund took place as recently as 11 October 2006, we must note along with many others who have spoken here today that the Peacebuilding Commission is just a little child that has not yet reached adolescence. If a useful assessment is to be made at this stage, it should focus on the level of attention and assistance that the Commission enjoys from those who created it, rather than on the Commission itself, which is still seeking to define itself.

This debate is timely nonetheless. It allows us to consider potential interaction and synergies between the various partners and stakeholders in this common undertaking. Such a collective and constructive commitment should be made on the basis of adherence to a few simple rules, including respect for the Commission's mission, as established under resolution 1645 (2005); appropriate distribution of work among the partners involved in order to avoid duplication; and open and transparent debate within the Commission in

order to promote concerted action to mobilize all local, regional and international actors.

Of course, such a comprehensive approach to addressing issues should take into account the elements associated with integrated strategies for peacebuilding and the re-establishment of peace. But it should also take into account those related to conflict prevention.

In order to gain full credibility, the Peacebuilding Commission must not give the appearance of being just another body cut off from reality. The Commission has the advantage that its main area of operations is in the field, where it is called upon to be a catalyst that can mobilize all the necessary elements to ensure the success of its mandate.

Two countries are currently on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission: Burundi and Sierra Leone. Country-specific meetings devoted to those countries began on 13 October 2006. In that regard, concerns arose in connection with the mobilization of financial resources — a matter that has now become a central issue. Moreover, it is clear that there continue to be social and political obstacles, which pose real threats to stability in those two countries.

The high level of youth unemployment and the critical state of social infrastructure in both Burundi and Sierra Leone can lead to popular unrest, which could give rise to unforeseen problems. In addition, the security services do not yet have the necessary means to ensure public order. However, in order to build peace it is clear that we will need to enhance the capacities of those countries, especially their economic and social capacities. We must also help them improve the administration of public resources, combat corruption, ensure respect for human rights, promote good governance and the rule of law and launch and nurture national dialogue.

Economic progress and improved living conditions for the people concerned are therefore essential to the stability we seek. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) correctly recalled that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Thus, a situation that may appear to be back to normal can always conceal threats that can emerge if we ignore certain unforeseen elements. The experience in Timor-Leste has been a good lesson for us all in that regard.

It is clear from its first experiences in Burundi and Sierra Leone that the Peacebuilding Commission needs sustained support from the international community. To that end, we will have to put in place strategic options adapted to each situation. Of course, the areas for intervention must be identified in partnership with the Governments concerned and with civil society, while at the same time endeavouring to establish a hierarchy of priorities.

Experience in these first cases should provide a basis for improving the Commission's intervention mechanisms. Success in those cases will make it possible for us more clearly to consider future cases, such as Timor-Leste, Haiti the Democratic Republic of the Congo and others. We should not lose sight of the fact that, to be reliably successful, all peacebuilding efforts should have the support of the relevant national authorities, provided progressively beginning at a specific stage of the undertaking.

The Peacebuilding Fund is certainly not a development fund as such, but it should be able to assist us in finding solutions to various urgent problems in a holistic way. It is therefore important to ensure that the Fund has predictable resources. The appeal made by the Secretary-General at the launching of the Fund — in which he emphasized the vital importance of donor support, without which the objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission will not be achieved — should be repeated today, and that is what we are doing.

The new Commission will of course not replace existing bodies. The principle of complementarity is at the very heart of the interaction between the various bodies of the United Nations system. In order to benefit from that, however, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should all continue to adapt to ensure that they too achieve a level of effectiveness that meets both their Charter objectives and general expectations. In other words, to use the metaphor of parent and child, the existence of the Peacebuilding Commission should ease the conscience of those who established it, just as parents pass on to their children the dreams and ambitions that they themselves could not realize. The Commission would otherwise be just another body in an insufficiently reformed international institutional framework. Of course, that is not what we want.

We believe that the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission is a promising beginning as regards the reform of the entire United Nations system. In conclusion, we therefore appeal for enhanced coordinated efforts to ensure the continued growth of the Peacebuilding Commission in the spirit of coherence so badly needed by the United Nations system today.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered shortly by the Permanent Representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union. I shall therefore limit my statement to a few additional comments.

At the outset, Mr. President, I wish to commend your initiative to convene this open debate on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In our view, this is an important and timely opportunity to explore ways and mechanisms for interaction between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in order to strengthen the synergy of efforts aimed at helping post-conflict countries to manage the difficult transition from war to peace.

We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission could benefit from more structured interaction with the relevant principal organs of the United Nations. In addition, the Council could benefit from a proactive approach and the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission in dealing with specific post-conflict situations.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to bridge a critical gap in the peacebuilding architecture. In that respect, the first results of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission demonstrate that the decision to create that new United Nations body was a step in the right direction. At the same time, we must continue to seek its proper place in the system of United Nations institutions, so as to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to efficiently utilize its unique capabilities and comparative advantages.

The Peacebuilding Commission should continue to develop its mechanisms to better serve as a forum for coordination and exchange of views among major stakeholders, donors and countries with experience in peacebuilding, with a view to defining integrated and tailored country-specific post-conflict strategies. In that regard, we share the belief that, as the Permanent Representative of Italy rightly pointed out, the best added value will come not from formal reports or decisions, but rather from operational outcomes envisaged in the interaction stimulated by Peacebuilding Commission meetings in the field that bring together all stakeholders and donors. That will be more helpful, in our view, than trying to reach negotiated agreements on formal decisions and reports. The measure of its success should be gauged by fewer numbers of countries relapsing from fragile peace to conflict, and not by a greater number of reports and more paperwork.

In our view, the work of the Peacebuilding Commission will be most effective in the country-specific mode in the field, where its work should be focused. We also believe that the Peacebuilding Commission should be oriented towards seeking practical solutions to complex problems in the area of post-conflict peace consolidation. In that respect, we support the idea of establishing working groups to comprehensively discuss some of the specific aspects of peacebuilding in country-specific meetings, such as the rule of law and other crucial elements of peace consolidation processes. These working groups could bring together different parts of the United Nations that have been involved in the peacebuilding process, major stakeholders and donors.

During its presidency of the Security Council in February, Slovakia will organize an open debate on one important aspect of peacebuilding, and that is security-sector reform. We believe that a more coherent and systematic approach by the international community is needed to address this issue and to secure the proper functioning of security forces and institutions in a post-conflict country. We believe the Commission might play a crucial role in this regard in helping countries to address this problem in a comprehensive manner and could generate long-term support and resources to ensure the coherence and sustainability of the process over the long term.

Last but not least, we believe that in the future the Security Council should make better use of the Peacebuilding Commission as a source of advice on peacebuilding strategies and mandates. Finally, we believe that the number of situations on the Commission's agenda could be gradually expanded to include such countries as Haiti, Timor-Leste or the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An important prerequisite for this would be proper definition of the Commission's role and mechanisms to manage an

increased number of highly complex situations. Here again, we want to underline the importance of country-specific mechanisms in the field as a way to meet this goal.

Based on the concrete proposals and observations we have heard this morning, we believe that today's discussion will generate useful ideas that could help to bring new dynamics to the work of the Commission and strengthen the interaction of the Council with the Commission.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): Mr. President, I appreciate your initiative in scheduling this open discussion of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I will be brief, as I think it is more important that we listen to our guests here today, including the President of the Economic and Social Council, Assistant Secretary-General McAskie, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and the chairs of the country-specific meetings of that Commission, the representatives of the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund and particularly the Permanent Representatives of Burundi and Sierra Leone.

I suggest that we look at this debate and the discussion on the Peacebuilding Commission to take place soon in the General Assembly as opportunities to re-energize our common effort to better contribute to concrete results on the ground. No one working in post-conflict situations, no citizen of a country trying to emerge from months or years of fighting cares at all about United Nations lines of authority or the institutional breakdown of seats around the conference room table. They care and we should care — about results. What we all agree on is the goal of strengthening the Commission's ability to make a real difference in strategies to support countries emerging from conflict, to help these societies establish the institutions and systems necessary to prevent a relapse into violence.

From the United States perspective as a member of the Security Council, the goal of the Commission must be to facilitate better coordination between the Council's security component and the broader post-conflict stabilization efforts of the international community. The Commission should provide a forum for the various agencies, Governments and organizations involved in a particular post-conflict situation to come together and share their assessments and work plans and to better coordinate and target their respective efforts, and for the Council to benefit from their common advice and best recommendations.

The strength of the Peacebuilding Commission will be found through pragmatic, action-oriented and country-specific recommendations to address the problems of post-conflict peacebuilding. The problems encountered by countries emerging from conflict are not solely — and for some, not even mainly — a lack of resources. In any event, this is something for which the Commission will not be able to compensate. Rather, the problems have rather to do with how to ensure that the activities of the national Government and outside partners are well coordinated, that the significant funds available through existing donor mechanisms are best utilized and that the international community's attention to these countries' needs does not fade.

We will take this same practical spirit into the discussions that take place in the General Assembly, in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission itself and, most importantly, in the Commission's country-specific meetings. We hope others do too.

We appreciate the opportunity today to hear the views of others, both inside this Council and out, on how we can help the Commission better serve our common goal.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): May I join others in congratulating you, Mr. President, for holding this debate and for giving us the opportunity to hear so many valuable contributions in the Chamber today.

It is now seven months since the Peacebuilding Commission was established, and it is appropriate that we in its parent body take stock. In this vein, we, along with others, very much look forward to the debate in the General Assembly next week. We are optimistic about the value the Commission can add. It is a new body and is still feeling its way, but we believe the Commission membership is committed to practical steps to improve peacebuilding across key aspects of the work of the United Nations.

The Commission was created, as many speakers have noted, because there was in a gap in the market. Countries emerging from conflict had no natural home at the United Nations, and several slipped back into conflict when international scrutiny was diverted

elsewhere. This has cost too many lives. So the Commission ensures that countries emerging from conflict remain on our agenda — the joint agenda of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, that these countries benefit from the respective scrutiny we can provide and that they align countries, troop-contributing countries, donors, international financial institutions and other actors in a coordinated set of priorities across the social, security, economic and rule of law areas.

I should like to align myself with the statement to be made soon by Germany on behalf of the European Union and will therefore confine my intervention to concentrating on some core elements of the Commission's work on which we hope we can all focus in the coming months. By the time of the Commission's first anniversary, we should be proud of the positive impact this new body is having on the ground.

First, we believe that the core mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission is its country-specific work with strong national leadership. When the Commission reviews a country, there are six fundamental things we believe it should do.

First, the Commission should take a comprehensive look at peacebuilding to identify the most pressing priorities and make recommendations covering governance, human rights and aid, as well as peace and security. Second, it should involve a wide range of actors, including civil society and the private sector, to agree upon a common vision of how to build peace and promote exchanges of information, coordination and best practice. Third, it should provide scrutiny and honest assessment of progress and problems. Fourth, it should, through frank dialogue with the Government concerned, provide recommendations for action to be followed up on by the Security Council, the international financial institutions, United Nations agencies and other partners. Fifth, it should ensure follow-up to those recommendations through regular progress reviews. Sixth, it should ensure that lessons learned are compiled and disseminated.

The United Kingdom believes that within this framework and with the establishing resolution serving as a foundation, there are three key areas where the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission can develop an effective working relationship. I note from the important contributions we have heard today that there seems to be a wide measure of agreement on how this partnership might work.

First, the Security Council can use the Peacebuilding Commission for advice. The timing of the request for advice is important — for example, before a mandate renewal, or before the establishment of a new peacekeeping operation. But the nature of the request is also important. The Council could ask for an overview of the situation or advice on a specific issue.

Secondly, the Security Council receives the advice and acts on it appropriately. Sometimes the Council might simply take note of the advice. At others, the advice or recommendation for action will need further evaluation and action by the Council.

Thirdly, the Commission provides early warning to the Council, for instance, drawing the attention of the Security Council to setbacks and risk factors in countries on the Council's agenda.

We see this particular area is one where the Security Council can add value. I am also sure that there is complementarity in the value on the economic and social side that the Economic and Social Council will be able to add.

I want to stress that there is no exclusivity here. We look forward to discussion in other bodies of the United Nations. All contributions are equally valid.

Finally, I cannot mention the development of the Peacebuilding Commission's work without mentioning the Peacebuilding Support Office. I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for all her efforts so far in bringing this office to life. The Support Office has a number of critical roles. It acts as a secretariat to the Commission, it supports the United Nations country teams in their work with the Commission, and it is a repository for relevant lessons learned so that we can all benefit from best practices.

We hope that by the time of the Commission's first anniversary it will have an important impact on the ground. That means that the peacebuilding priorities identified by the Commission are being implemented in Sierra Leone and Burundi, it means that the United Nations and international actors are being more joined up in support of these priorities, and it means that by July we would hope that the Peacebuilding Commission has an annual calendar of meetings agreed, that there should be well-established

in-country consultation mechanisms with national Governments taking the leading role, and that the Peacebuilding Support Office should be working at full strength. With the help of all the colleagues on the Peacebuilding Commission, we believe that we can reach these goals.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We thank the delegation of the Russian Federation for organizing this important meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding. My delegation is pleased that the Security Council extended an invitation to the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Peacebuilding Commission and other important actors that are participating in this debate today. We also appreciate the fact that the Security Council has opened this meeting to other States Members of the United Nations as a way of demonstrating that peacebuilding is a responsibility for all.

Last year, both the General Assembly and the Security Council established the Peacebuilding Commission. Now that the Commission is soon to be a year old, it is time for each organ — the General Assembly and the Security Council — according to its respective mandate, to reflect further on the purpose and mission of the Peacebuilding Commission.

At present, my delegation is concerned that the Commission means different things to different people. To quote briefly the ambassador of Angola and Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission,

> "Let us all agree that our theoretical differences in New York are meaningless to those who are directly suffering from the consequences of conflict on the ground. What matters for them are concrete actions and not just eloquent statements."

For example, it is easier to explain that the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, since it cannot have the resources of the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank or even the International Monetary Fund. Also, the Commission cannot simply meet in New York to discuss far-away countries that are struggling to emerge from conflict. What the Peacebuilding Commission is, and should be, is more complicated and difficult to explain.

According to the founding resolutions passed by both the Security Council and the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission has three main purposes. The first is to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. Its second purpose is to focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development. The third purpose is to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and without the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery.

Certainly, the aims and purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission are phrased in language that is vague. What is clear, however, is that the Commission has to make its impact on the ground, which means that it needs to embrace strategies for post-conflict recovery that enjoy the confidence of the countries concerned. Without country ownership, the Commission is likely to be regarded as a structure that imposes solutions that may be unacceptable to the countries that are supposed to benefit from its expertise and advice.

The Peacebuilding Commission has to be knowledgeable about the actors on the ground that are promoting post-conflict recovery, since it is in the best position to enhance coordination and cooperation among various stakeholders. The Commission can bring together the United Nations agencies, the donors, civil society and the Governments in a common purpose of building peace and thereby fill the gap that is always present when various organizations and agencies are trying their best to achieve the same goal from different perspectives and mandates. In this way, the Commission may be able to identify a niche for itself.

We welcome the recognition by the Security Council of the link between peace and development, which is reflected in the integrated approach to peacekeeping. In response, the civilian components of peacekeeping operations are structured under a development pillar and a security pillar. Peacekeeping is an integral part of peacebuilding, and therefore it is

important that peacekeeping operations create an enabling environment for those involved in peacebuilding efforts, including the promotion of human rights, so that their efforts could be integrated from the point of the deployment of a mission. This integrated manner is already reflected in the Council mandates for recent complex missions such as the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, and others.

The Security Council could seek advice from the Peacebuilding Commission before peacekeeping operations are deployed and after the Council has decided on mandates, so as to ensure greater cohesion between the United Nations peacekeeping operations and other actors involved in peacebuilding. Before scaling down the activities of peacekeeping operations in a country emerging from conflict, the Security Council could also consult with the Commission, so that the transition is smooth and everything is in place when the peacekeepers leave.

The holding of elections has often been considered as a benchmark for declaring that a country has emerged from conflict and is ready for the next stage of peacebuilding. Yet there have been occasions when the donors, including the Bretton Woods institutions, have needed more assurance beyond the holding of elections, no matter how free and fair those elections may be. I pause here again to quote the President of the Economic and Social Council, who put it much better in his statement by calling this tactic "a wait-and-see approach". While the holding of elections is an important indicator of future stability, it may not indicate that a country emerging from conflict is beyond a relapse to its past.

A more comprehensive indicator of stability may be a combination of the holding of democratic elections, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), reconstruction and security sector reform. Yet in some countries emerging from conflict, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme have been slow in funding or implementing DDR activities because of large unpaid debts owed to them — usually by the previous regime or Government. The Peacebuilding Commission could provide a forum through which problems relating to the slow pace of funding peacebuilding activities could be resolved quickly.

The quick injection of resources into a country emerging from conflict is often the glue that keeps that country from falling apart once again. Here, I would like to refer to the statement made earlier by the Representative of Sierra Leone, who said simply that the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission reflects a sense of urgency. For that reason, we believe that the donor community needs to be flexible and to remain engaged, particularly in the early post-conflict stages.

The Peacebuilding Fund was created for the specific purpose of assisting in the facilitation of peacebuilding activities. The Fund was understood to be a catalyst for attracting much-needed resources — particularly at a time when there may be little hope of success towards recovery. It is for that reason that we hope that the role of the Peacebuilding Fund will be clearly defined. It would be unfortunate if, because of the Peacebuilding Fund, the Peacebuilding Commission were to be mistaken for a donor agency.

Finally, there are fundamental practices that the Commission should follow if it is to become successful. One of these is ensuring that countries emerging from conflict have full ownership of the building of the peace for the benefit of their people. Another is to make certain that the Peacebuilding Commission develops rules of procedure that are permanent and predictable. It should be clear to everyone what the Commission is about and what it can and cannot do. Lastly, the Peacebuilding Commission will soon be requested to consider taking on other countries, beyond Sierra Leone and Burundi. We hope that such requests will be considered in the light of the experience gained in assisting the first two countries on the Commission's agenda.

The Peacebuilding Commission is very important for the lives of people in countries that are emerging from conflict. It needs to be a beacon of hope and promise. Its impact must be felt on the ground. In other words, the Commission should soon meet in Freetown or Bujumbura. New York meetings alone are not going to make a great difference in the lives of people in Freetown and Bujumbura, who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, I, too, would like to commend the delegation of the Russian Federation for having organized this debate,

which affords us the opportunity to highlight the importance and review the performance of the Peacebuilding Commission. In this regard, we are grateful to the various officials and the representatives of Sierra Leone and Burundi for their briefings and statements.

I associate myself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We all clearly have a stake in the Peacebuilding Commission, whose creation is but one important step in the implementation of the institutional reforms needed to enable the United Nations to respond to the needs identified in the 2005 World Summit Outcome for an institutional, systematic and seamless connection between peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. Only an effective Peacebuilding Commission can ensure that the huge investments made by the international community in peace and stability in those volatile parts of the world will achieve the most positive, sustainable and irreversible outcomes.

The success of the Commission will certainly bring encouragement and hope to millions of people — especially those in Africa — caught in the vicious cycle of conflict and poverty. We are very pleased, therefore, that the Organizational Committee held meetings during which Burundi and Sierra Leone were selected as pioneers in post-conflict peacebuilding under the auspices of the Peacebuilding Commission. They deserve all the support they can get in their recovery efforts because, as pilot projects, their success will impact on the future of the Commission.

The danger of relapse is all too real and ever-present in societies that are still emerging from conflict. In a climate of high expectations and lurking distrust, the transition from peacekeeping to post-conflict recovery poses enormous institutional challenges that can easily overwhelm any Government. Above all, we must understand that as long as the underlying causes of conflict remain unaddressed, we could be on shaky ground.

In our view, therefore, the most important role of the Peacebuilding Commission will be to identify, to prioritize and to target its limited resources with a view to addressing those fundamental problems. In this way, the Commission can be a worthy partner and help national Governments to adopt the best practices in governance that are so critical to long-term reconciliation and stability and ensure a seamless transition from conflict to the promotion of sustainable peace and development.

As a member of the Organizational Committee, Ghana recognizes that the Peacebuilding Commission, like any new body or agency, will have teething problems. However, we are of the considered view that we need to agree early on our modus operandi. In this regard, we should avoid creating unnecessary bureaucratic layers and procedures and focus more on the delivery or implementation of agreed national strategies. As has been evident from some of the statements made today — especially the passionate appeal by the representative of Sierra Leone — we should strive to reduce the time lag between approval and disbursement of resources.

Previous speakers have rightly highlighted the organic relationship that must exist between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission and, by extension, the other organs of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It cannot be otherwise, because of the inextricable link between peace, security and development. Indeed, the Peacebuilding Commission offers a unique opportunity to test the efficacy of the growing preference for an integrated approach to United Nations missions and, probably, to point the way towards improved foreign aid management.

Since the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, we should all participate in decisions relating to the disbursement of its resources. Everything must be done to avoid the known pitfalls of donor practices, which have been criticized for duplication of effort, politicization and lack of local ownership, as well as for high administrative costs.

The Commission is expected to take a broad approach in its work and to bring together all relevant actors in order to serve as a forum for dialogue and cooperation between national actors and the international community. It is therefore well placed to blaze a new trail in international cooperation by drawing on the knowledge, expertise and experience accumulated by the United Nations, donor agencies, international financial institutions, women, non-governmental organizations and civil society over the years so as to develop programmes that can effectively

address the often complex and interrelated problems which are peculiar to each post-conflict situation.

It is precisely because each conflict is sui generis that we think the Peacebuilding Commission should be encouraged to have technical meetings in the countries concerned with a view to better appreciating and understanding the internal or local situation.

The Peacebuilding Commission, as it develops, should also pay due attention to the regional and subregional dimensions of peacebuilding, seeking to reinforce regional organizations in their peacebuilding efforts and to utilize their expertise.

It is also our candid view that, as a newly created body, the Commission has an ideal opportunity to incorporate a gender dimension into its mandate and its work from the start. In consonance with resolution 1325 (2000), the Peacebuilding Commission should seek to involve women in all aspects of the peacebuilding process.

While we share the view that the Peacebuilding Commission cannot be expected to assume the responsibilities of an elected Government, we also believe that the nature of its operations requires an appreciable level of involvement in order to win the confidence and trust of its clients. After all, it is expected to play the role of a coordinating body that leverages national and international resources. The presence of the Commission must be felt throughout the receiving State, as the traumatized population needs to be assured that the international community remains fully engaged in finding solutions to their problems.

Needless to say, in order to meet the challenges of effective peacebuilding, the Peacebuilding Commission needs adequate resources. We doubt whether the quantum of money so far pledged, although commendable, is commensurate with the tasks and urgent needs in post-conflict countries.

Finally, we recognize that the Peacebuilding Commission can only facilitate peace; it cannot build it. Although adequate financial resources are crucial to successful peacebuilding, it is the will and determination of the Governments and the peoples concerned to preserve the peace and change the course of their own history that ultimately constitute the most decisive factor and the best guarantee of sustainable peace and development.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding. Indonesia associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Peacebuilding Commission is truly a unique platform, in that it serves to bridge the current critical gap in the international post-conflict peacebuilding system. Although the Commission is still in its early stages, we recognize that the expectations are high. It is therefore the view of my delegation that this public debate should be intended as a forum for the exchange of views among the stakeholders in order to explore practical ways of strengthening the Commission and enabling it to perform its work in an effective and efficient manner.

Enhanced interaction and complementarity among various United Nations organs aimed at supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission would be beneficial. In that context, we look forward to the expected debate on the Commission in the General Assembly, which will provide important input on how to better assist the Commission in its tasks.

While the Peacebuilding Commission is expected to contribute to the advancement of global peace and stability, we are of the view that it can have a particular impact in its role as a coordinating body that leverages international and national expertise. An inclusive and well-coordinated approach would systematically synergize peacebuilding efforts at both the national and international levels.

It is our opinion that the work of the Commission would be more results-oriented if integrated peacebuilding strategies fully reflect the priorities of the countries concerned. Each integrated strategy needs to be broken down into manageable phases laying out a credible set of tasks and identifying the actors concerned. It should have a degree of flexibility in order to adapt to changes on the ground.

The priorities have to come from national Governments, and ownership of the post-conflict recovery process is paramount. We feel that a better coordinated, more coherent and well organized international support system, provided through the Peacebuilding Commission, would facilitate better access and response for the countries in need. Here, we would like to underline that the work of the

Commission should not create a separate layer of complexity for existing processes and that the Commission should not try to micromanage the activities being carried out in the countries concerned.

We must be careful, however, not to end up creating a donor-recipient culture in the Peacebuilding Commission. Due care must be exercised so that the donors to the Commission are not perceived as controlling it, because that would only draw unnecessary criticism towards the United Nations.

My delegation takes note that the resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission do not clearly provide modalities for the involvement of regional and subregional actors. We therefore feel that there is also a need to provide practical tools and guidance for engaging regional and subregional actors in country-specific configurations.

The positive role of the relevant stakeholders is crucial to a successful transition from the post-conflict phase to the normal process of sustainable peace and development. Hence, we are pleased to see the participation of various important entities in this discussion. Their contribution is useful, not only because they provide the Council with additional ideas on how to support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, but also because the work that they do on the ground for people ravaged by conflict is indeed very valuable and much appreciated.

My delegation is also of the view that civil society and non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, as well as the private sector, should play constructive roles in post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. In the light of that, we would like to underline the need to formulate a modality enabling them to participate actively in peacebuilding activities.

We are particularly encouraged by the most recent country meetings on Burundi and Sierra Leone, which were more action-oriented. We look forward to the presentation in the near future of the work plans on both countries by the respective Chairs of those country meetings. The progress made on key elements contained in the Chairs' summaries needs to be evaluated through more frequent meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Finally, my delegation would like to state that we need to strike a balance between the work of the Organizational Committee and the country-specific configurations, as success in one aids the other. A properly empowered and robust Committee would serve to strengthen the work of the Commission.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting. We would also like to thank the representatives of the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for their participation in today's debate.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established as an outcome of the 2005 World Summit. For the first time in its history, the United Nations has a mechanism to coordinate and address post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. Despite the remarkable results achieved over the past 60 years by United Nations Blue Helmets operations in putting an end to armed conflicts, the United Nations faces a great many challenges in building sustainable peace. We hope that the Commission's establishment will herald better times for post-conflict countries and their peoples and that it will enable them to realize their dreams of peace and development at an early date.

The healthy development of the Peacebuilding Commission, a newborn baby in the United Nations family, will depend on the joint efforts of all Member States; it is also the joint responsibility of everyone. Peacebuilding in any post-conflict country is, by its very nature, a comprehensive and systematic undertaking and requires that each of the parties concerned fully play its role.

First, countries under consideration at the country-specific meetings must enjoy full ownership, which is a prerequisite for successful peacebuilding. One of the Commission's main functions is to provide advice for peacebuilding in post-conflict countries and to help those countries to formulate integrated strategies. In a sense, the countries under consideration are the Commission's clients. It is only by communicating with them as much as possible and by gaining a better understanding of their needs that the Commission can establish clear objectives for its work and develop country strategies that are appropriate to their specific situations.

Secondly, the Commission's function in comprehensive coordination must be enhanced. That is

the key to successful peacebuilding. Coordination should be carried out at the following three levels.

The first is coordination among the different plans for reconstruction in post-conflict countries. Before the Peacebuilding Commission entered the scene, a number of plans for reconstruction and framework documents may have already existed. The Commission should consolidate them into an integrated strategy and programme of action.

The second level of coordination is that among different players. Peacebuilding is a complex undertaking, with a host of players, including donors, countries that by tradition are influential, international financial institutions, civil society and so forth. The Commission needs to establish and maintain channels for smooth communication among the players.

The third level of coordination is that among different organs of the United Nations. The General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council all play an important role in peacebuilding, according to their respective mandates. The relationship between them should be complementary rather than competitive and should enable them to capitalize on their respective comparative advantages. Thirdly, the focus of the Peacebuilding Commission should be country-specific meetings so that integrated strategies and programmes of action can be formulated promptly for countries under consideration, because they constitute the very soul of peacebuilding.

Having finished drafting the guidelines for its work in the initial phase, the Peacebuilding Commission should shift its focus to country-specific meetings in a timely manner. Its work should be practical, efficient, focused and action-oriented, with a view to developing integrated strategies and programmes of action that affect the specific situations of the countries under consideration. The Commission should try not to be over-ambitious and should concentrate its limited energy on solid, down-to-earth work. Only by branding and building up prestige at the outset can it attract more attention from the international community.

Fourthly, the role of the Support Office should be brought into full play so as to provide guarantees and support for the effective functioning of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Support Office should not only serve as a secretariat by preparing for meetings and providing conference services, but it should also actively make bold proposals to the Commission in the fields of policy, theory and strategy by taking advantage of its wide access to a great variety of information and its extensive contacts, thereby playing the role of a good adviser.

The international community, and developing countries in particular, have high expectations of the Peacebuilding Commission. This June we will celebrate the first birthday of this newborn baby. We hope that with the joint efforts of all, the Peacebuilding Commission will be able to give us a report card that pleases everyone. This will be the best birthday present it can give to itself. China is ready to join the international community in working hard towards this end.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

The issue of post-conflict peacebuilding has never been more topical in the context of United Nations activities, in particular those of the Security Council. Experience shows that achieving lasting peace and the effective resolution of armed conflicts is possible only on the basis of a comprehensive approach. This approach must include preventive and peacekeeping efforts, along with peacebuilding measures for post-conflict reconstruction, and ensure continuity and consistency during the transition from one phase to the next. Such an approach will allow us to create firm guarantees of regional stability and the non-renewal of conflict.

An important tangible result of the decisions taken at the 2005 summit was the joint establishment by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the Peacebuilding Commission. This body, as this morning's discussion has shown has considerable practical potential and could become one of the important mechanisms of international support for the reconstruction of States that have experienced armed conflicts.

In general, the Commission's work on Burundi and Sierra Leone in its first six months of existence is to be commended. We note the efforts of the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Commission — the Permanent Representative of Angola, Mr. Gaspar Martins, and his two country coordinators, the Permanent Representatives of Norway, Mr. Løvald, and

of the Netherlands, Mr. Majoor. We must also note the considerable work done by the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. McAskie.

However, there were not just successes during this period. We suggest that the well-known difficulties are largely due to the complexity of this initial stage in setting up a commission. In its activities, particular attention should be given in the future to ensuring close coordination with the recipient countries. In this context, we welcome the participation in today's meeting of representatives of Burundi and Sierra Leone and the confirmation of their readiness to cooperate with the Peacebuilding Commission.

It is important that members of the Commission conduct an impartial and collective analysis of priorities for peacebuilding in countries on their agenda, and that they develop agreed recommendations that provide assistance required both by recipient States and by the Security Council. If proper account is taken of recommendations developed together with Governments of recipient countries by the Commission, the General Assembly, the Security Council, United Nations agencies, the donor community, the international financial institutions and other interested parties, this will improve the coordination of international post-conflict support and reduce the risk of a relapse into a crisis.

Particular attention must be given to enhancing cooperation between the Commission and the Security Council, particularly at this stage when Burundi and Sierra Leone are on the agenda of both bodies. It is important to establish a timely exchange of information and show a clear division of labour. Of course, this must be done while at the same time developing links between the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

There is a clear need for more systematic work by the Commission and more careful preparation of its country-specific meetings in order to increase their effectiveness. It is important to have a sensible mix of closed meetings and open, informal consultations within the Commission and the work of the expert groups on specific questions of Burundi and Sierra Leone.

The most important component of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission is its work on the ground with national Governments and involving the United Nations country teams and the donor community. Here, additional attention must be given to harmonizing the activities of the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Commission with existing coordinating mechanisms, first and foremost within the United Nations system itself. What is needed is cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and United Nations agencies in the field that does not infringe upon existing United Nations operational activities but rather enhances them, including by taking account of the existence of specific cooperation programmes with recipient countries that have been endorsed by the executive boards of those United Nations agencies.

The General Assembly, in our view, is precisely that forum where Member States can find an answer to this question. We welcome the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement to hold a plenary meeting of the Assembly to discuss the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We suggest that the interest shown in the Commission by the two main United Nations bodies is a guarantee of the close and constructive cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council to achieve our common goal — that is, to increase the effectiveness of international efforts in the area of peacebuilding.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Serbia, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union would like to thank the Russian Federation, as presidency of the Security Council, for organizing this very timely debate on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission following the first two rounds of country-specific meetings.

The European Union sees the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission as a key achievement of the United Nations reform process. Together with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, it forms the core of the United Nations new

peacebuilding architecture. As a flexible instrument, the Peacebuilding Commission is "learning by doing". In our view, members should be willing to work creatively within the given framework.

From its inception, the European Union has supported the concept of the Commission as a body that will ensure an integrated approach to peacebuilding, taking into account the links between security, development, human rights and the rule of law. That very much corresponds to the European Union's comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, development and peacebuilding. Over the years, the European Union has developed and used an array of instruments. They include political and development-related tools, as well as conflict prevention and crisis management mechanisms.

The European Union, the States members of the European Union and the European Community engage in peacebuilding activities worldwide — in Africa and Asia, as well as in the Middle East, Europe, Central Asia and Latin America. European member States and the European Community fund and implement projects in all areas of peacebuilding. A few such important areas include demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, good governance, reconciliation efforts, child- and gender-related post-conflict assistance, trade-related measures and reconstruction operations. The European Union is committed to actively supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission on the basis of its experience, resources and worldwide operability.

The Peacebuilding Commission has got off to a good start. After only two sets of country-specific meetings, it has identified areas of priority action for the two countries under consideration. The Commission has also established a dialogue among Governments concerned, the United Nations system, institutional donors, regional actors and members of the Peacebuilding Commission. Now, the recommendations of the Commission must be implemented in the countries concerned and within the institutional framework of the United Nations. Here, the Commission also needs the support of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and dialogue must be broadened in the countries concerned to include national civil society, the private sector and other relevant parties.

One year after its establishment, the Commission will also have to make decisions as to its strategic goals. If the Commission is to add value to peacebuilding efforts worldwide, and particularly in the countries themselves, it will have to be ambitious. It will have to be more than the tools we already have, more than a mere coordination mechanism, and more than a donors' conference. Promoting the development of a viable peacebuilding strategy that has broad ownership is where the Peacebuilding Commission can really add value.

The European Union would like to contribute to the discussion among the Commission's members on structuring the future work of the Commission and its interaction with other actors. In doing so, we would draw on our own experience in coordinating European Union programmes, as well as on the experience of the first country-specific meetings.

The Commission has defined general areas of priority for each country under consideration. It will now be useful to further prioritize within those areas, in consultation with the countries concerned, United Nations country teams, donors, civil society and the private sector.

Defining priorities necessarily means making a selection among a huge number of possible areas of engagement. The Peacebuilding Commission should focus on areas that have a direct and traceable link to the causes of conflict, areas in which instruments of so-called classical development are not available or functional, and areas where coordination and integration are especially needed. All peacebuilding initiatives in the field should be linked to existing strategies and programmes to avoid duplication of efforts.

We want the Commission to be able to work coherently, continuously and in a result-oriented way. To achieve that, the Commission should focus on activities in the field. It should enhance cooperation with all relevant actors, including donors and non-State actors. It should make use of regular informal meetings in between formal meetings and find a way to capture and condense lessons learned from its work.

The Security Council has started to discuss its relation to the Peacebuilding Commission, how to intensify communication between the Council and the Commission, and how best to achieve implementation of advice from the Commission. A similar dialogue is

getting under way between the Commission and the General Assembly with the upcoming open debate in that organ. The European Union welcomes those efforts and also recognizes the contribution that the Economic and Social Council can make.

There are many ways to enhance cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Regular meetings between the Commission chairs and the presidents of those bodies would be one possibility. Invitations to the chairs and the chairs of country-specific meetings to brief those bodies would be another.

The European Union remains committed to working on integrated peacebuilding strategies with the Peacebuilding Commission and with the countries concerned. We are determined to make that key project of United Nations reform a success and to make its impact felt positively in the regions where the Peacebuilding Commission is engaged.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): First, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January and for the excellent work that you and your delegation have accomplished during that period.

As coordinator of the caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the Peacebuilding Commission, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement regarding the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission.

There can be no denying that, in the recent past, the United Nations has seen a surge in the requirements for peacekeeping operations around the world. The role of those operations has become more complex and demanding, placing a huge responsibility on the United Nations, and as a consequence has led to a tremendous strain on existing resources. We recall that it was in response to that development that the concept of a Peacebuilding Commission was introduced in December 2004 as a result of a high-level United Nations report. It subsequently gained momentum in March 2005 when then Secretary-General Kofi Annan released his report entitled "In larger freedom".

In due deference to and respect for the prerogatives of the Security Council and the role of the presidency in advancing initiatives relating to international peace and security, the Non-Aligned Movement is concerned that the Security Council should at this stage find it necessary to review the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. While it is no secret that the Commission has experienced some difficulties with its internal operations and processes, we think that it is both lacking in merit and premature to have the Security Council review or evaluate its activities at this juncture, in particular in the light of the stipulation by General Assembly resolution 60/180 that the Peacebuilding Commission shall submit an annual report to the General Assembly, which shall hold an annual debate to review it.

Since its establishment by General Assembly resolution 60/180 — which also established its modus operandi, among other working parameters — the Commission has met four times on matters concerning its core functions. The Commission has examined the situations in Burundi and Sierra Leone, and has approved the disbursement of much-needed finances to support crucial areas identified by key stakeholders and the Governments of both countries. The key areas are those pinpointed as most likely to lead to a relapse into conflict.

The Non-Aligned Movement places significant value on the Peacebuilding Commission, in particular its role in support of national ownership of post-conflict peacebuilding priority planning and initiatives. Notwithstanding the fact that the Commission is still in its formative stages and still going through the expected teething processes, it has worked as closely as possible, under the circumstances, with national authorities to ensure national ownership of the peacebuilding process. There is concurrence, and indeed broad consensus, within the Commission that economic reconstruction and rehabilitation and a comprehensive set of risk-reduction strategies should be at the forefront of all efforts aimed at sustaining peace, initiating development and promoting post-conflict recovery.

The Non-Aligned Movement emphasizes that due respect and regard must be shown for the role of the Organizational Committee in the preparation of country-specific meetings and in evaluating the progress made and charting the way forward after each country-specific meeting, based on the summaries of the meetings prepared by the respective Chairpersons,

in addition to the full participation of the countries under consideration in the decision-making process.

It is also useful to remind ourselves that the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, as its activities are carried out in a far broader and more comprehensive and participatory context, consistent with its mandate. Decisions regarding the provision of financial resources should therefore be guided by national priorities and be based on the collective decision of members of the Peacebuilding Commission. Recommendations for assistance must highlight the priority areas established by the Government of the country under review by the Commission. The matter of Government guidance should also be uppermost in planning the way forward, and will certainly serve to strengthen the process of national ownership. The holistic and inclusive approach to evaluation and recommendations adopted at country-specific meetings can only add to the integrity of the process within the Commission.

The Non-Aligned Movement would also further like to reiterate that the Peacebuilding Commission's involvement in reconstruction efforts is based clearly on General Assembly resolution 60/180, which stipulates the need for a dedicated mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction, and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development.

Despite the seemingly clear channels for the Peacebuilding Commission to work towards achieving its objectives, the Non-Aligned Movement is of course concerned at certain shortcomings that, if not addressed, could have the unwanted effects of stifling its work or threatening to undermine its capability and effectiveness. The Movement would therefore like to see an increase in the frequency of meetings of the Organizational Committee to assess and evaluate strategies, attend to reconstruction and institution-building efforts and work towards developing recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, among other things.

Additionally, the Peacebuilding Commission must identify the means by which funds that are approved for disbursement reach recipient countries in the shortest possible time. It is not sufficient to identify the urgency of the need while paying scant regard to, or becoming lax in, follow-up actions at the most crucial stage.

It is necessary to strengthen the role and the work of the Organizational Committee as the entity governing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, the Commission is the body responsible and entitled to elaborate on the guidelines regarding meetings in the country-specific format, as well as the work of the Peacebuilding Support Office. We would therefore call on all to avoid any action that could be construed as undermining the authority of the Organizational Committee.

Looking ahead, the Non-Aligned Movement is convinced that the upcoming debate in the General Assembly will undoubtedly enrich the awareness of the general membership as to the progress being made within the Peacebuilding Commission, notably in addressing the outstanding organizational and substantive issues. That debate will of course add value to the open debate now taking place in the Security Council, and will not only increase the momentum of the follow-up to the multi-dimensional aspects of the cases under consideration within the Commission but will also enhance its effectiveness, in line with the respective prerogatives and responsibilities of both organs.

The caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement in the Peacebuilding Commission would like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the Ambassador of Angola, Chairperson of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as to the Chairpersons of the country-specific meetings and the Peacebuilding Support Office, for the successful outcome of the country-specific meetings held to date. The Movement would also like to encourage the wider membership of the Peacebuilding Commission to remain unrelenting and vigilant in efforts to consolidate the gains and achievements made to date, so as to mitigate the possibility of countries under consideration relapsing into conflict.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to associate myself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement members of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission is currently in the process of establishing its identity in order to put its imprint on its efforts, in line with the mandates conferred upon it by the resolutions that established it.

We believe that the central matter as regards the Commission's future is the issue of its relevance. Since it is not a new donor entity — notwithstanding the importance of the Peacebuilding Fund — it is essential that the Commission be given the leadership role in mobilizing and coordinating resources and efforts in support of countries emerging from conflict. The Peacebuilding Commission must not become a body for academic debates. It should instead be in the field providing advice and working with countries emerging from conflict.

To that end, it is essential to strengthen ties with international financing institutions, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional banks, as well as with the community of donor countries. We welcome the efforts made in that regard. Likewise, we believe it is necessary to adopt the necessary measures to ensure the broadest possible participation by all relevant actors in the search for solutions to the most pressing problems encountered by countries emerging from conflict, including participation by civil society.

In the future it will be necessary to strengthen the role and work of the Organizational Committee as the managerial body of the Commission — in particular its country-specific format, which is key.

We believe it is urgent to avoid competing visions that could weaken the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. This requires action agreed between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as proper coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

With a view to strengthening the work of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, we believe it is necessary to establish an annual calendar of formal meetings, leaving the necessary flexibility to carry out informal meetings whenever necessary, either in a country-specific format or another format.

We observe with concern the persistence of discussion on how to carry out the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. National ownership in determining and carrying out national priorities is, of course, a basic premise in this respect. National priorities are identified as a result of an internal process of consultation carried out by the national Government, with participation of various national actors. But in our opinion, defining national priorities is a two-way street, and the Peacebuilding Commission cannot be excluded. One of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission, according to resolution 1645 (2005) is "To bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery" (*para. 2 (a)*).

We are pleased that in the months since its work began, the Peacebuilding Commission has addressed the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone. During this period, specific plans of action were reviewed for both countries, with the active participation of the national authorities of those countries; the contribution of the Peacebuilding Support Office in approving the disbursement of significant assistance for both countries was valuable. This year we should follow up on the status of the implementation of the agreed programmes. It will also be necessary for all of us to make efforts to replenish the resources of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Lastly, beyond the required reports mandated by the resolutions, we feel that at this stage the most important thing is for the Peacebuilding Commission to make active cooperation with countries emerging from conflict a priority.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. As announced at the outset of the meeting, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3.30 p.m. sharp.

The meeting was suspended at 12.55 p.m.